

REMARKS

Please reconsider this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-15 were pending in this application. By way of this reply, independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 12. Thus, claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Also, claim 13, which was dependent from claim 12, has been amended to depend from claim 1. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments. Accordingly, claims 1-11 and 13-15 are now pending in this application. Claims 1 and 9 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 or 9.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 12-15 contain allowable subject matter. Independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 12. Thus, independent claims 1 and 9 are now in condition for allowance. Dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reason. Accordingly, Applicant believes that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 8, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,441,403 to Chang et al. (hereinafter "Chang"). In view of the above, Applicant believes this rejection is moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0195619 to Makimoto et al. (hereinafter "Makimoto"). In view of the above, Applicant believes this rejection is moot.

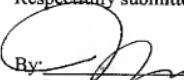
Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,543,638 to Nettelbladt et al. (hereinafter "Nettelbladt"). In view of the above, Applicant believes this rejection is moot.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 08228/071001).

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Respectfully submitted,

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